

Assemblyman **PAUL KORETZ**

Forty-second Assembly District

proudly representing the communities of West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Los Angeles, Century City, Westwood, Bel Air, Brentwood, West Los Angeles, Hollywood, Hancock Park, Universal City, Studio City, and Sherman Oaks



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Koretz Bill To Warn Boaters About Dangers of Carbon Monoxide Sails Out of State Assembly

Assemblyman Reminds Boaters to Boat Safe During National Safe Boating Week

Assemblyman Paul Koretz (D-West Hollywood) noted that it is "**National Safe Boating Week**," an event promoting and highlighting safe boating practices that begins on May 22nd and continues through the Memorial Day weekend. The theme for this year's campaign is "Boat Smart...Boat Safe...Wear It!"

On a related note, the State Assembly today passed Koretz's AB 2222, designed to warn boaters about carbon monoxide poisoning and to reduce injuries and fatalities by prohibiting "teak surfing" and other activities in which a person is near the back of a motorized boat, near the exhaust. The bill received a very strong bi-partisan vote of 59-19.

The bill is called the Anthony Farr and Stacy Beckett Safe Boating Act of 2004, in memory of 11-year-old Anthony Farr of El Dorado Hills and 15-year-old Stacy Beckett of Chino, both of whom died from being overcome by carbon monoxide while body surfing behind a boat.

California's 1,000 miles of beautiful coastline and nearly 1,000 lakes and rivers are a source of beauty, relaxation, and recreation for residents and tourists alike. However, they can also be a source of danger, trauma, or worse. In fact, California ranks second only to Texas in the number of boating accidents each year.

"Unfortunately, when we're having fun, it's easy to forget that boating can be extremely dangerous. We must remember to be alert at all times," said Assemblymember Koretz. "National Safe Boating Week is the beginning of a year-round crusade to increase awareness of the need for recreational boaters to take command of their safety at all times while on the water."

In addition to not wearing life jackets, factors to blame for boating mishaps include operator inexperience, inattention, hazardous weather and water conditions, and stress factors such as fatigue and sun or wind exposure, and the drinking of alcohol.

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Koretz urged Californians to learn more about the dangers of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning while boating. All marine engines emit lethal amounts of CO, which is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that can kill anyone in minutes if they are too close to the boat's exhaust.

"Boaters should never be near the back of the boat when the engine is running, not even for a minute," Koretz said. "Teak surfing behind the boat or holding onto or resting on the swim platform can expose you to deadly amounts of carbon monoxide. Unfortunately, most people are totally unaware of this danger ~ even lifelong boaters and watersports enthusiasts.

"Above all, use your common sense. Always wear a life jacket. Never drink while boating. Always operate your craft at a safe speed, and be alert for weather changes. And never swim, rest or play near the back of the boat when the engine is on. These are rules every boater should live by, not only during safe boating week but whenever you are on the water," concluded Koretz.

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